

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 1705

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PINS, EC
SUBJECT: ROLDOS-HUERTA TICKET GIRDS FOR CAMPAIGN

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: THE CONCENTRATION OF POPULAR FORCES (CFP)/POPULAR DEMOCRACY (DP) ALLIANCE ANNOUNCED ITS ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN PLATFORM WHICH SKILLFULLY COMBINES THE TWO PARTIES' PREVIOUSLY-HELD POSITIONS. ASSAD BUCARAM EXPECTS TO RUN IN THE 1983 ELECTIONS. HE HAS BLAMED THE GOE'S DECISION TO EXCLUDE HIM FROM THIS YEAR'S ELECTION ON THE INFLUENCE OF "A RACIST INTERNATIONAL POWER," AS OBVIOUS REFERENCE TO ISRAEL. IN RESPONSE TO THE MARCH 11 BOMBING OF HIS HOUSE, CFP/DP VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE OSVALDO HURTADO, CHARGED THE GOE IN BARELY-VEILED LANGUAGE WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE INCIDENT. END SUMMARY.

2. ON MARCH 14 THE RECENTLY FORMED ALLIANCE OF ASSAD BUCARAM'S CONCENTRATION OF POPULAR FORCES (CFP) AND THE POPULAR DEMOCRACY PARTY (DP - COMBINED CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS AND PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVES) ANNOUNCED THE PLATFORM THAT WILL STAND BEHIND THE JAIME ROLDOS/OSVALDO HURTADO TICKET. COMPOSED OF LOOSELY-DEFINED OBJECTIVES, THE PLATFORM SKILLFULLY RECONCILES AND BLENDS HURTADO'S (AND THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS') CENTER-LEFT DOCTRINAIRE
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OUTLOOK WITH THE CFP'S MORE FLEXIBLE AND PRAGMATIC POSITIONS. FOR EXAMPLE, WHILE CALLING FOR "APPROPRIATE" LAND REFORM (DP PROGRAM) AND THE ELIMINATION OF PRIVILEGES AND INEQUITIES (CFP) THE PLATFORM EMPHASIZED RESPECT FOR PROPERTY AND PRIVATE BUSINESS (CFP) AND RECOGNIZED THE POTENTIAL OF THE MILITARY FOR MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL OBJECTIVES. THE LATTER ITEM APPARENTLY REFLECTS

AN ATTEMPT TO REASSURE THE MILITARY THAT IT WOULD HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR FROM A ROLDOS ADMINISTRATION.

3. ALSO INCLUDED WERE CALLS FOR HONEST, RESPONSIVE GOVERNMENT AND IDEOLOGICAL PLURALISM. PERHAPS SIGNIFICANT BY ITS ABSENCE, THERE WAS NO REFERENCE TO ASSAD BUCARAM OR IMPLICATION THAT ROLDOS WAS A MERE STAND-IN FOR THE NOW-BLOCKED CFP LEADER. ON BALANCE, THE PLATFORM IS A COMMON DENOMINATOR REFORMIST DOCUMENT AND CONTAINS NO SURPRISES.

4. THOUGH THE PLATFORM ITSELF DOES NOT IMPLY A RESURGENCE OF BUCARAM, HIS OWN REMARKS, AND THOSE OF ROLDOS AT A MARCH 16 QUITO PRESS CONFERENCE INDICATE HIS INTENTION TO RUN FOR THE PRESIDENCY IN 1983. WHILE ROLDOS SHARPLY REJECTED ON INSINUATION THAT HIS CAMPAIGN WAS AN ECUADOREAN VERSION OF THE CAMPORA/PERON MANEUVER BY SAYING THAT WITH HIS ELECTION THE PEOPLE (NOT BUCARAM) WILL COME TO POWER, HE DID INDICATE THAT THE CFP WOULD NOMINATE BUCARAM IN 1983. BUCARAM HIMSELF HAS NOTED THAT HE EXPECTS THAT CONGRESS WILL ABROGATE THE NOW CURRENT DISQUALIFICATION PROVISIONS, THUS PERMITTING HIS FUTURE CANDIDACY.

5. DEMONSTRATING PRECISELY THE SIDE OF HIS POLITICAL PERSONALITY WHICH HAD MADE THE QUESTION OF HIS CONFIDENTIAL

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"ECUADOREAN-ITY" A LEGITIMATE ISSUE, BUCARAM HAS PUBLICLY BLAMED HIS EXCLSUION ON PRESSURE PUT ON THE GOE BY "A RACIST FOREIGN POWER." THE REFERENCE WAS TO ISRAEL, AN UNCOMFORTABLE REMINDER TO ECUADOR'S SMALL BUT IMPORTANT JEWISH COMMUNITY OF THE DARKER SIDE OF BUCARAM.

6. IN AN EVENT APPARENTLY RELATED TO OSVALDO HURTADO'S AGREEING TO RUN FOR VICE PRESIDENT WITH THE CFP CANDIDATE, ON MARCH 11 A DYNAMITE BOMB BLASTED HURTADO'S QUITO HOME. THOUGH THERE WERE NO INJURIES, PROPERTY DAMAGE WAS SIGNIFICANT. IN BARELY-VEILED LANGUAGE, HURTADO BLAMED THE GOE AS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BLAST.

7. COMMENT: THIS LATEST BOMBING INCIDENT WILL FURTHER TARNISH THE GOE'S IMAGE BECAUSE OF THE GROWING BELIEF AND REALIZATION AMONG POLITICIANS AND THE PUBLIC THAT THE STRING OF BOMBINGS DIRECTED AGAINST POLITICAL FIGURES IS THE WORK OF CERTAIN ELEMENTS IN THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT. HURTADO'S RESPONSE, THOUGH MORE IMPLICIT THAN SPECIFIC, MARKS THE FIRST CRITICISM BY A MAJOR PUBLIC FIGURE OF GOVERNMENT-INSPIRED VIOLENCE.

8. AS THE FIRST AND ONLY COMPLETE TICKET, ROLDOS AND HUERTA HAVE STOLEN A MARCH ON THEIR RIVALS. THEIR CHANCES OF REACHING THE ELECTORAL RUN-OFFS DO NOT SEEM BAD AT THE MOMENT. IF ROLDOS CAN GET AT LEAST HALF OF BUCARAM'S PROJECTED VOTE PLUS GOOD SUPPORT FROM CATHOLIC INTELLECTUALS AND WORKING CLASS IN THE SIERRA, HE WILL BE CLOSE. MUCH DEPENDS ON THE CAMPAIGN, THE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR WHICH WILL BE DIVIDED BETWEEN BUCARAM ON THE COAST AND JULIO CESAR TRUJILLO IN THE SIERRA.
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